CATERPILLAR JAZZ TALK

HOW TO CREATE MELODIES - the language of Jazz and Blues

Most song melodies are based on **WORDS and SENTENCES**. Songwriters rarely write a melody and then add words to it later, they usually start with a mixture of lyrics, chords and melody.

A melody or an improvisation is like a **CONVERSATION** - listen to people talking - you could almost hear it like a song.

"Hi Joan, how are you"	(fast and upbeat)
"HENRY - I never thought I'd see you again!!	(shocked, loud, snappy)
"I've been unwell"	(sombre, slower)
"I'm sorry to hear that"	(sympathetic)
"I'm ok now"	(more upbeat again)
"That's great, how's the kids'	(optimistic)
"DIDN'T YOU HEAR"	(tension)
"WHAT?"	(worried)
etc	

Can you see the **variety** contained in even a short conversation. The different lengths, different volumes, different speeds, different pitches - you might hear a woman with a high voice and a man with a low voice, the tension, release, excitement, anger, boredom, sadness, joy, some people talk too much, some just grunt words

Use these ideas when you are creating melodies or improvising. Don't just play random notes. Do you TALK randomly? Ask **questions** in one phrase and **reply** in the next phrase.

To begin with stick closely to the **CHORD TONES** to form your phrases. So if you are playing Em7 chord in the left hand play around with the same chord tones in your right hand adding the odd 'in-between' note to liven it up. As you progress you can be more daring but work up to that.

Try playing the **CATERPILLAR JAZZ WALK** again and create a CONVERSATION with your RIGHT hand notes. Play it nice and slow. **THINK** about what you are doing, IMAGINE two people talking, it could be two lovers, or an argument, or just someone talking to themselves about a lost love or a past regret.

There are ideas to help you on the next few pages

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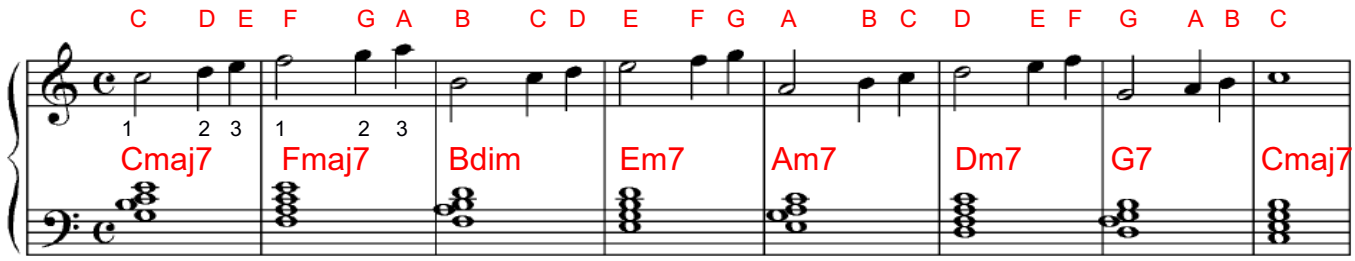
Ideas for Improvisation

The following are a series of right hand melodic patterns that you can play with the caterpillar chords.

PATTERN 1. Root - 2nd - 3rd

This is a simple riff. On each chord change play the root note then the 2nd and third

SMOOTH



SWING

PATTERN 2. USING THE C MAJOR SCALE (downwards)

Notice how certain notes of the scale actually correspond to the root note of the chord change.

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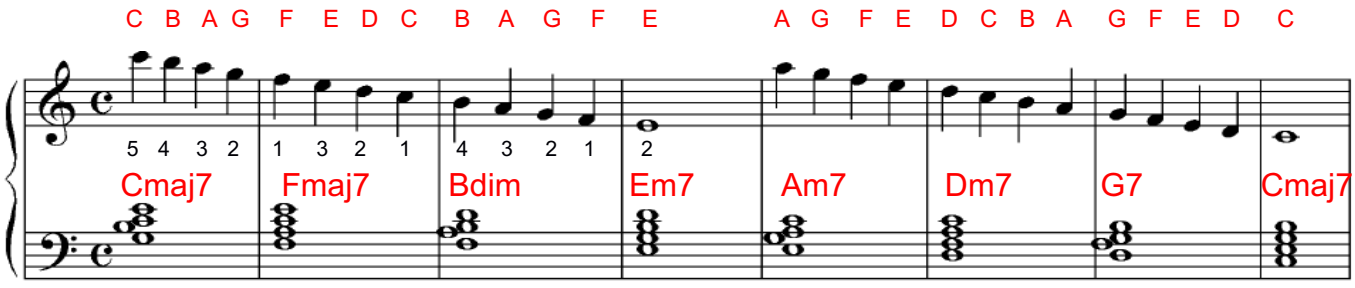

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PATTERN 3. TRIADS

Only use the basic (3 note) chord notes in the right hand (leave out the 7th)
Move from root position to backwards inversion.

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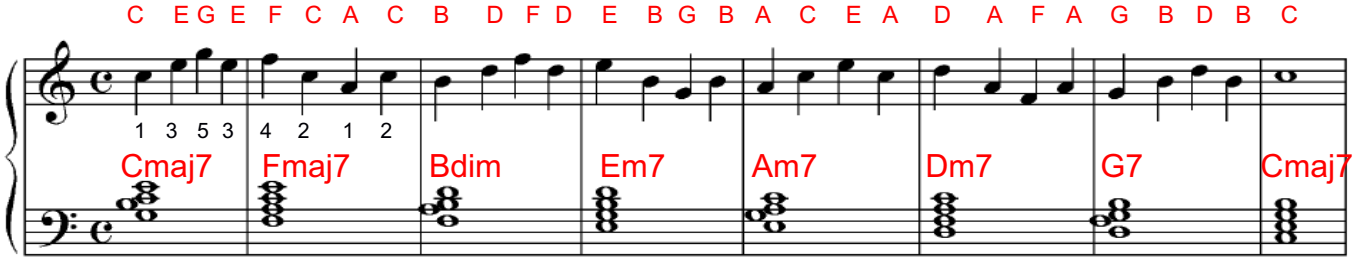

SWING